



HUMAN
RIGHTS
CAMPAIGN

ORIGINAL



April 4, 2002

Office of the Secretary
Federal Trade Commission
600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20580

Dear Secretary,

I'm writing to you in regards of the Federal Trade Commission's pending decision to apply the provisions of the Telemarketing Sales Rule to solicitations on behalf of nonprofit organizations. This is of grave concern to me both as the director of development for an organization that is very successful at raising funds over the telephone and as a member and telephone donor to many local and national nonprofit organizations.

My organization raises in excess of \$1.5 million per year from our generous members and donors and we would be financially damaged if the FTC's rules were put into place. These funds cannot be raised in any other fashion; if they could we would do it. We take the utmost care with calling and speaking with our donors over the phone, many of which actually prefer to be called by our courteous and well-trained callers. We often get positive feedback from our members regarding our timely updates and professional and knowledgeable representatives.

The most annoying calls—and the one's I most often here complaints for from friends, family, and our members—are about credit cards and long distance services. These cold calls appear out of nowhere and without request. Members and donors join organizations because they want to support when and if they can, they want to be in the loop when critical issues arise, and they want to have the choice to contribute when and how they please. I see no reason for making the national do-not-call registry applicable to calls made by or on behalf of nonprofit organizations—commercial and nonprofit telemarketing is are not even in the same ballpark. In fact, we have (like most nonprofit organizations) eliminated unwanted calls to our donors by requiring our telemarketing partners to keep a “do-not-call” list. We also require them to use the Direct Marketing Association's “do not call” list. Most importantly, nonprofits are dependent upon the revenue generated by their supporters and will do nearly anything to honor their requests and treat them with the utmost respect.

WORKING FOR LESBIAN AND GAY EQUAL RIGHTS.

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Nonprofits depend on grassroots fundraising and the proposed amendments to the Telemarketing Sales Rule will hurt the nonprofits and charities, which rely on telemarketing companies to raise money to fund their program services. At a time when government is seeking to do less, the public depends more and more on charities and nonprofits to provide social services and other forms of public good. The government should not be imposing restrictions that make the funding of these projects more difficult. If I put my name on the "do not call" list, then the organizations I customarily support will not be able to call me. I **am** opposed to any kind of blanket government prohibition that gets between non-profit groups and their supporters relationships. It does not make sense and is in fact, un-American.

Nonprofit telemarketing continues because it works. People want to receive calls to support organizations. When they stop giving over the telephone, charities and nonprofits will stop calling them. It is the American way. We don't need government's intervention. People do not give money to charities unless someone asks them. How are charities and other nonprofits going to fund the many goods things they do, if government is interfering with their right to seek public support?

As an ethical nonprofit fundraiser, a generous charitable contributor and a concerned taxpaying citizen, I urge the FTC to reconsider these erroneous and unnecessary regulations that will be imposed on some of the most organizations in our country.

Thank you for your consideration on this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cathy Nefson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Cathy Nefson
Development Director